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WASHINGTON MAGAZINE

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AN EVENING WITH

KAILIE SIMPSON

THE QUEEN, THE ICON, THE LEGEND

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IN MEMORIAM

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1954-2026

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GETTING BACK TO THE GAME

Caleb Washington reflects on two decades in the game show business and all of this month's game shows as well as future game shows.

by Caleb Washington

I have been associated with game shows, whether talking about, playing or hosting for two decades. Yes, that's right, 20 years. Hard to believe, I know. I can't believe I have done this for so long and I feel like that's part of who I am, which is great.

I have always thought of myself of the Alex Trebek or Wink Martindale or heck even, the Steve Harvey of my generation. I have been in this industry my whole life and I have no regrets. So, I am grateful to you all for the love and support you have given me and to the Game Show Playhouse (which ironically I started 5 years ago) for being so welcoming to me. What started as something silly during COVID turned into a viral hit. I can't wait until it turns 10. OK, I think I've bored you long enough, let's get into the task.

BUSTING BLOCKS

One of the game shows that made its mark this month was the classic game show, "Blockbusters". I hadn't done this game show in quite a while and I have got to say it's pretty nice to do this again. But, it might just be a one off.

"Blockbusters" is a Goodson-Todman game show from the early 1980s, hosted by the legendary Bill Cullen. It lasted two years on NBC, and was briefly revived in 1987. It also became it a massive hit in the United Kingdom. Of all the game shows that Bill Cullen hosted, this was my favorite one. It was a great quiz show.

RETURNING SHOWS AND ORIGINALS

As you know I announced that I would be bring back "*Who Wants to Be a Millionaire*" and "*Press Your Luck*" in the coming months. I was trying to do a demo of it last year, however, technical problems delayed all of that, so it had to be shelved. But I'm going to be working on that next month and hopefully, you'll be seeing some pictures of it. Hopefully.

Aside from those shows, I'm working on my own version of "Trivial Pursuit" as an original game show. It will likely be influenced by the current version and the 2008 "America Plays" version, minus the interactivity part. Watch out for the coming months for that.

THE LEGACY SQUARES

As I have mentioned last month, last year, CBS brought back legendary game show, *Hollywood Squares*, with Nate Burleson as host and Drew Barrymore in the famous center square shared by the likes of Paul Lynde and Whoopi Goldberg. The first season did really well and we got a Season 2.

And this season, we got the return of TOM BERGERON! Just to see him on the panel and temporarily back behind his rightful podium, it really put a huge smile on my face. It was just an AMAZING episode to watch and truly capitalized on what is otherwise an awesome revival of a game show classic.

It is one of the best revivals since Michael Strahan's *$100,000 Pyramid* and Alec Baldwin's *Match Game*, and that was TEN YEARS AGO! If only it could be 2016 again, but I digress.

GAME SHOW NEWS

Besides game show news on my end, we must get to real game show news, and the biggest one comes from across the pond in the UK.

The British version of Jeopardy!, hosted by Stephen Fry, is getting cancelled after its second series on ITV. That's a disappointment, because it was the best version of the Jeopardy in the UK. Jeopardy! is globally great, of course, our version is great here in the States (duh!), but I enjoyed the UK version too and I'm sad to see it go.

Survivor is starting its 50th season, "SURVIVOR 50", yes, 25 years on the air and its in its 50th season. Congratulations to them! Let's move on.

CALEB WASHINGTON IN TALKS TO HOST TRIVIAL PURSUIT

I love Trivial Pursuit, it is a great board game to play with friends and family. Now, there have been many attempts to turn in into a real game show, most notably on The Family Channel in 1993, with Wink Martindale, an interactive "America Plays" version in 2008, hosted by Christopher Knight, and recently on the CW with LeVar Burton.

I enjoyed watching all the versions of "Trivial Pursuit" on TV and that has influenced me to come up with my own version of "Trivial Pursuit" as an original game show for Game Show Playhouse. I'm thinking about hosting and producing it. It will probably be influenced by the CW version. You'll have to wait for that one.

AN EVENING WITH
KAILIE SIMPSON & FRIENDS

Our favorite "rock and roll baby" kicks off a brand new season of musical fun at the world's greatest arena with the help of some famous faces, Caleb Washington has all the latest.

by Caleb Washington

It's 2026 and we are officially back on the music scene! Unfortunately, I was passed over to host the Grammys, AGAIN! Trevor Noah, really? Anyway, *Big & Tall Recording*, the grandest stage of them all, has open its doors for a brand new year of fun and excitement and who better to kick us off than the queen, the icon, the GOAT, Kailie Simpson.

I have known Ms. Simpson for quite a while now, and she is an awesome performer. Whether she is performing solo or in a band, she rocks!

Last year, she released some new songs, like “Rock N Roll Baby”, “Patti Smith” and “Woman”. Plus, she starred in her own documentary.

RED CARPET

This month, Big & Tall opened its doors once again, and this season premiere DID NOT DISAPPOINT! I mean, did not disappoint. The red carpet was filled with superstars who had come far and wide to see the biggest names in music kick off a big milestone for the arena.

From musical geniuses like Louka and Kaymars, to “Cassie and the Wildcats” star, Kara Silvestri, to yours truly. It was an all around a fun time. It wasn’t as big as the Grammys, but it sure felt like.

KAILIE GOES ACOUSTIC

Kailie Simpson kicked the night off with an all acoustic performance with a guitar and piano, and the debut of a new single called "I Bet You Don't Think About Me" which she released last November.

There's not much more I can say, except, she absolutely killed it! I mean, KILLED IT!

VETERAN PERFROMANCES

Following Kailie's performance, we got *Big & Tall* legend Melissa Cherie, performing her biggest hits, "Nevrland", "Baby Blue" and "Northern Skies".

What more needs to be said about her, than she's an ABSOLUTE ICON!!! But, of course, you don't have to take my word for it!

MATT KELLEY AND THE BIG REVEAL DEBUT

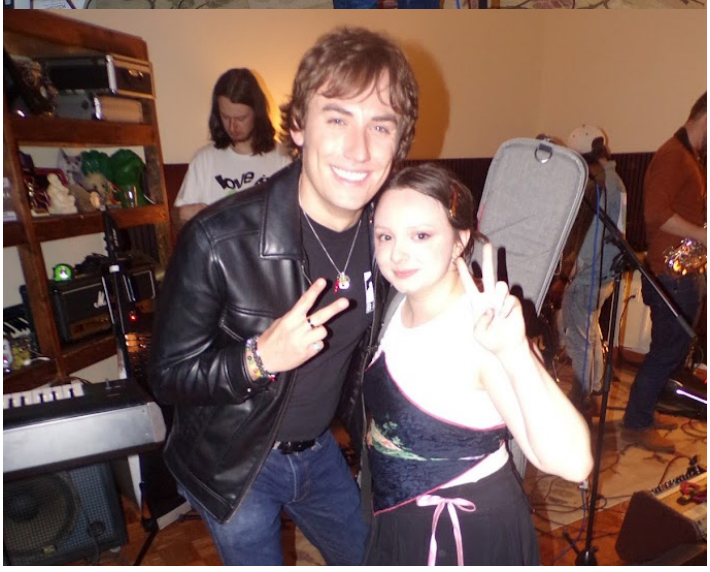
After their successful performance at last year's Big & Tall Fest, popular Brooklyn-based singer/songwriter Matt Kelley and his band, "The Big Reveal",

made their official debut this month.

The band performed everything from original songs from Matt's latest EP, which he recently released to covers of Bruce Springsteen.

Ok, where do I begin? If I had to make a list for best performances of the night, this is right up there with Kailie Simpson's performance.

One of the reasons, because of Kelley himself, he is truly an awesome singer and really gives off Bruce Springsteen vibes. Plus, he can rock a keytar, which I've never seen before. Plus, I need to give bonus points to the sax player in the band. It was just overall incredible to watch. I hope I get to see perform again soon.



Overall, a great start to a real historic year for Big & Tall, and I can't wait to see what happens in the coming months.

THE NEW *"WANNABE DIVA"*

Meet Isabella Basile, the Actress Who Has Been Tapped To Lead New Movie, "Confessions of a Wannabe Diva"

by Caleb Washington

Last November, I announced my second short film, "Confessions of a Wannabe Diva". Well, after searching far and wide for the best actress to lead my second short film, I found an actress who can play this role, fellow WPU alum, Isabella Basile.

Basile, is making her feature film debut, after years of performing on the Broadway stage, and I am excited to have her on board for this film. She joins the cast as main character, Hallie Lockhart, an aspiring musician, but can be best described as an 'entitled brat', who will stop at nothing to get what she wants, which is fame.

WHO IS ISABELLA BASILE?

Isabella is an actress and musician, who has performed in stage productions like *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* and *Into the Woods*. Besides her theater roles, she is also the lead singer of the band, "Maxxed Out."

SALUTING JANIS

A concert series saluting the legacy of the original queen of rock and roll is on the horizon

by Caleb Washington

If anybody has known me for a long time, you know how I like to spice things up when it comes to film and music video content. I needed a break from pop music, so I started listening to more of rock music. Just like my old show, "Pop Rock". So, I have listened to Jerry Lee Lewis, Carole King, Elton John, heck, even Billy Joel. And, trust me, I'm trying to get studio-based cover videos on that. One day, and soon I hope, that day will come. But, there was one superstar from the old days that really stuck out at me, and I decided, let's not just make a video based on her, let's make a special about her. And, that is Janis Joplin.

WHO IS JANIS JOPLIN?

This is not a Wikipedia page, but here's a brief bio on Ms. Joplin.

Janis Joplin was in born in 1943. She was best known for powerful bluesy rock style of singing. She rose to prominence in the 1960s, when she was the lead vocalist in the band *Big Brother and the Holding Company,* which is still active today.

After she left the band in 1968, she went on to have a very successful solo career, releasing such hits like "Ball and Chain", "Piece of My Heart", "Me and Bobby McGee" and "Kozmic Blues". She even performed at Woodstock in 1969. She also collaborated with other artist like Tom Jones and Grateful Dead.

Sadly, in 1970, she passed away at the age of 27, due to a drug overdose.

WHO DREW ME TO JANIS JOPLIN?

What drew me to Janis, was not just her music, and her vocal style, it was also her taste in fashion. I just liked the way she dressed. Overall, she's a wonderful talent. So, I think what better time than now to honor her music and legacy.

WHAT IS MY VISION FOR THIS TRIBUTE SHOW?

Producing this tribute special honoring the late singer is pretty simple, I'll be hosting this special, giving some brief facts about Joplin, and there will be performances in between by either NJ or NY artists. It could be in the style of a PBS documentary or "Greatest Hits" from "Whose Line is It Anyway?". I thinking about going with the latter, because I don't want to bore you with some random facts. And just like with a daytime morning show I might plan in the future (hint hint), I might have a co-host with me.

Who is going to perform Janis' hits for this special, well, that's up in the air, because there's so much talent I want in this special. But, you'll see who when, "Janis: A Tribute to the Queen of Rock" premieres this summer.

STAGE
HANNAH MONTANA
HANNAH MONTANA

THE RETURN OF HANNAH

Everybody's most beloved pop star is returning.
Caleb Washington gives his reactions.

by Caleb Washington

For our last story this month, we are getting the best of both worlds again! Hannah Montana is coming back! Sadly, not as a reboot and thankfully, NOT AS A SPINOFF! Come on, enough with the spinoffs already!

As you may have heard, Disney+ has announced a 20th Anniversary Special of "Hannah Montana". Miley Cyrus, of course, teased it on her Instagram (as seen in the picture).

I think I can speak for all fans of Hannah Montana and for us who grew up with the golden era of Disney Channel in the 2000s, I am excited to see for this. I just wish it was on Disney Channel, not just on Disney+.

This is the second anniversary special this year after High School Musical celebrated their 20th anniversary special last January.

Hannah Montana premiered on Disney Channel in March of 2006, and became an immediate hit with audiences, mostly teens, and made Miley Cyrus a household name. The show ran for a total of four seasons before its final episode in 2010. It even spawned a TV movie, “Hannah Montana: The Movie”.

I’m not gonna bore you with the usual show rundown, unless you’ve been living under a rock, because I just don’t have the energy frankly.

It spawned merchandise from board games, to CDs, just to name a few.

For the four years it was on, it was an absolute phenomenon. I think it would be a bit of a stretch to say, it inspired a lot of the current crop of popstars like Sabrina Carpenter and Chappell Roan.

Now, I was a huge fan of Hannah Montana back in the day and I still am to this day. As mentioned at the top of this story, this was part of the golden age of Disney Channel, alongside fellow Disney shows, “That’s So Raven”, “Lizzie McGuire”, “The Suite Life of Zack and Cody”, among other great shows.

You can still watch this show with your own kids on Disney+ and it will make its impact with the newer generation.

So, as for the 20th anniversary special, we are expected to see some reunions of some sorts and some memories from behind the scenes of the show.

Disney, please and I mean, please, DO NOT SCREW THIS UP!

It will be interesting to see how this will play out.

CREDITS

Some photos were taken by Caleb Washington (me)

Some photos courtesy of Instagram and Getty Images

“Blockbusters”, © Mark Goodson/Bill Todman Productions

“Jeopardy!”, © Sony Pictures Television

“Hollywood Squares”, © CBS Studios, King World Productions

“Hannah Montana”, © Disney